DIFFICULTIES TO BE OVERCOME-THE TROUBLE WITH NEW SOUTH WALES-SCOPE OF

THE PROPOSED PEDERATION. (FROM AN OCCASIONAL CORRESPONDENT OF THE TRIBUNE.]

The fate of Australian federation will be decided by the results of the referendum in New South Wales on June 20, on which day the residents of that colony will be asked to accept or reject the Australian Commonwealth bill, as amended by the Premiers of New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania, sitting in special conference in Melbourne. Some idea of the extent of territory affected is afforded by the fact that in one-half of it could be placed the whole of England, Wales, Ireland, Scotland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Germany, Beigium, Holland, Austria, Switzerland, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Greece and even Palestine, leaving the remaining half open for the reception of other countries. Alluding to this, one of the leading advocates of Australian federation, speaking at a great public meeting in Sydney, asked his hearers to think what would have been the course of English history at the time of the heptarehy if the seven kingdoms into which the land was di-vided had remained separate. It would have been, perhaps, just what might happen, metaphorically speaking, if the seven colonies of Australasia did not have the good sense to come together in the bond of brotherhood. With federation, Australia. which was second to no country on the face of the earth, would produce the best of all races-something like the true American type, a mixture of English, Welsh, Scottish, Irish and Australian

In New South Wales every registered elector has an electoral right, a small sheet of paper contain-ing his name, residence, electoral number and other details, which must be produced before he is allowed to record his vote. In taking the referendum, the whole of the colony is treated as a single constituency, the holder of an electoral right being permitted to vote where he pleases, his electoral right, when so doing, being stamped in such a manner that it cannot be used a second time for the same purpose. The voting is by ballot, the voter being supplied with a ballot paper on which are inscribed the words, "Are you in favor of the Australian Commonwealth bill? Yes. No," the woter striking out the negative or the affirmative as he may prefer. The paper is then folded and deposited in the ballot-box. It is anticipated that the voting will show a large majority in favor of federation; and, should such be the case, no time will be lost in taking the Queensland referendum. so that the Australian Commonwealth bill may be sent without delay to the imperial authorities for approval

NOT A RECENT MOVEMENT

federal movement in Australia has not been of sudden growth, although its later developments have been somewhat rapid. It is the outcome of a rational sentiment, fostered by the increasing number of native-born Australians, cherishing a strong oride in the possibilities of the land of their birth. In Victoria an Australian natives' association was established, with branches in the other colonies, with the object of cultivating a national spirit, the desirableness of Australian unity forming the leading theme at the annual meetings. The late Sir Henry Parkes, formerly Premier of New South Wales, was a strong advocate of colonial federation; indeed, almost every leading individual in Australia has declared its accomplishment essential to the material welfare of the colonies, but Sir Henry Parkes disliked any movement in which he was not allowed to occupy a predominating place, and when, in response to the popular demand in Australia, the Federal Council of Australia was established, in 1885, Sir Henry Parkes not allow New South Wales to be represented, although the representatives of the other colonies had seats in the Council. The imperial authorities regarded the Council as a step in the direction of Australian federation, which, it was thought, would become more readily accomplished by accustoming the Australian colonies to act in concert in matters of common interest.

The objects of the Federal Council of Australasia

are stated in the imperial enabling act to be 'for the purpose of dealing with such matters of common Australasian interest, in respect to which united action is desirable, as can be dealt with without unduly interfering with the management of the internal affairs of the several colonies by their respective legislatures." Each independent colony was to be represented

by two members, and each crown colony by one member. The Council was to meet at least once in pointed years, the first meeting to be held at Hobart, in Tasmania, and the others in such places as night be decided upon. To it also was intrusted legislative authority in respect to the relations of Australia with the Islands of the Pacific, preven tion of the influx of criminals, control of fisheries in Australian waters beyond territorial limits, enforcement of judgments of courts of law of any colony beyond the limits of the colony, extradition of criminal offenders, etc. The Council also had authority to refer to the legislatures of the several colonies a number of matters, including general defences, quarantine, patents, copyright, bills of exchange and promissory notes, uniformity of weights and measures, naturalization of allens—in fact, almost everything of general Australasian interest with respect to which the legislatures of the several colonies could legislate within their own limits, and as to which it was desirable that there should be a law of general application, provided that in such cases the acts of the Council should extend only to the colonies by whose legislatures the matter should have been referred to and adopted.

THE FIRST MEETING OF THE COUNCIL. The first meeting of the Federal Council was held at Hobart on January 25, 1886, the colonies represented being Victoria, Tasmania, Queensland, Western Australia and Fiji. At subsequent meet-Council Fiji remained unrepresented, but in 1889 South Australia sent a couple of representatives. The members of the Council consisted principally of the Premiers and leading Ministers of the colonies represented. The acts and recommendations of the Council have been accepted by the whole of the colonial legislatures, with the exception of New South Wales, whose abstention naturally made the unity of legislative action initlated by the Council incomplete and partially in-

In 1890 Sir Henry Parkes, Premier of New South Wales, who had systematically ignored the existence of the Federal Council of Australasia, issued & circular to the Premiers of the other Australasian colonies, the result being an Australasian Federation conference at the Parliament Houses, Mel-bourne, in February of the same year, at which all of the colonies were represented, the New South Wales delegates being Sir Henry Parkes and the Colonial Treasurer, W. McMillan. At this conference it was arranged that a convention of representatives elected by the several co-lonial parliaments should be held in Sydney in March, 1891, each colony having seven representatives, with the exception of New-Zealand, which had only three. The convention was presided over by Sir Henry Parkes, and a draft bill was prepared to be submitted to the several colonial legislatures, but its provisions falled in securing general ap-

proval, and ultimately it was abandoned. In 1886 George Houston Reld, who had succeeded Sir Henry Parkes in the Premiership of New South Wales, and had vigorously opposed the scheme approved by the Sydney convention of 1891, ranged to take advantage of the assembling of the Federal Council in Hobart to convene a meeting of Australian Premiers to discuss what further steps could be taken toward securing the federation of the colonies. After considerable discussion the Victorian and South Australian Premiers prepared a draft enabling bill, which, after some amendments had been made, was accepted as the type of bill suitable for giving effect to the federal resolutions adopted by the conference. Two other con-ferences were subsequently held, one in 1896 at Syd-

ney, and the other in 1897 at Hobart. LOOKING TOWARD FEDERATION.

The result of the various conferences was that acts were introduced and passed by the parliaments of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania, enabling their respective Premiers "to take part in the framing drawn. The New-Zegland Government held aloof, holding that the distance between New-Zegland and Australia constituted a formidable obstacle to Australissian federation under existing circumstances. stances in accordance with the provisions of the enabling of a sections of delegates to a national rederal seaventies took place in March, 1887, each of the

acceptance and enactment of a federal constitution for Australasia." A similar act was introduced into the Queensland Parliament, but encountered such a large degree of opposition that it was with

five colonies, forming a single constituency, returning ten representatives, all men of high standing and marked ability. The convention was opened in Adelaide, under the presidency of C. C. Kingston, Premier of South Australia, and a draft constitution bill was prepared. Copies of this bill were sent to the various colonial governments, to be submitted to their respective parliaments for approval, but several of the provisions encountered much bitter opposition, principally in New South Waies, where the principle of allowing the several States, large and small, equal representation in the Federal Senate was condemned by both the upper and lower chambers. Many other objections were taken, but when the convention reassembled in Sydney in the following September very little disposition was evinced to adopt any important amcodements. Another and final meeting of the convention was held in Meibourne in January, 1898, at which the Federal Constitution bill was formally adopted.

PREPARATION FOR THE REFERENDUM On the return of the delegates to their respective colonies preparations were made for taking the referendum in each, with the exception of West ern Australia, In Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania the result was a foregone conclusion Tasmania the result was a foregone conclusion, but in New South Wales public opinion was much divided, the leading points of objection being the scheme of federal finance and the principle of equal representation in the Senate. Ultimately the New South Wales Parliament decided that unless 80,000 votes were recorded in favor of the measure, no matter how large the affirmative majority might be, it would be equivalent to rejection. In the other colonies a simple majority sufficed to secure the adoption of the bill. The result of the voting in the four colonies was as follows:

lows:		
New South Wales. Victoria South Australia Tasmania	. 100,027 . 35,771	Against 65,05 21,971 17,80 2,71
Totals	218.916	107,949
Although there was a majority Wales, the affirmative votes did no utory number required, and the	t reach t	he stat

Wales, the affirmative votes did not reach the statutory number required, and the bill was subsequently rejected. This led to a collapse of the whole movement, for without New South Wales federation was impossible.

At the general election in New South Wales, in July, 1883, a majority of candidates were returned piedged to support federation, and in accordance with the popular demand Mr. Reid, the Premier, introduced a series of resolutions expressing the desire of the New South Wales Parliament to promote the work of Australian federation, but setting forth certain amendments required in the bill, The resolutions being adopted, another conference of Australian Premiers was held in Melbourne in January of the present year, when a portion were accepted, and it was decided that the bill in its amended shape should be submitted to a second referendum in each of the colonies, a simple majority sufficing in all. The amended bill was bitterly opposed in both the New South Wales houses of Parliament, and Mr. Reid had to increase the number of members of the Legislative Council before that body would consent to send the amended bill to the electors for their decision.

SENTIMENT IN DIFFERENT SECTIONS.

SENTIMENT IN DIFFERENT SECTIONS. In Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania the supporters of the Australian Commonwealth bil constitute an overwhelming majority; in Western Australia the colonists are comparatively indiffer ent; in Queensland they will be influenced by the decision of their brethren in New South Wales where the opposition is strongest among the busi ness men of Sydney and a considerable section of the Labor party, the members of which consider the proposed federal constitution not sufficiently democrate. In the New South Wales country districts the feeling is overwhelmingly in favor of the bill, as the moment it becomes law the border tariffs which have so largely restricted intercolonial trade would cease to exist. The harsh manner in which these occasionally operate has recently been illustrated in Victoria, where a duty of two shillings a head is levied on all sheep passing from New South Wales into that colony, with a fine of 1100 a head for evasion of the duty. The Victorian customs authorities discovered that large numbers of sheep were being smuggled across the border, one New South Wales grower thus evading fines to the amount of £3,000,000 sterling. He was let off with payment of the evaded duty and a fine of £1,000, if a colonist on the New South Wales side of the Murray rides across a bridge into Victoria he has to pay duty on the horse ridden by him, and has some difficulty in obtaining a rebate on his return. Hence the eagerness evinced by country residents in all parts of Australia for a system of government which will cause the removal of such barriers to trade intercourse.

THE FINANCIAL DIFFICULTY. Labor party, the members of which conside

THE FINANCIAL DIFFICULTY But here comes the financial difficulty which has occasioned so much trouble and ill will. In all the colonies with the exception of New South Wales the intercolonial duties constitute a leading source of revenue. If they are abelished the loss thus occasioned must be made good by a federal tariff. which will also have to furnish the amount re quired to meet the cost of the federal government But New South Wales asks why, having no interduties, and consequently no incur, it should be burdened with a federal tariff at that the selection of Washington as if the United States Federal Government wise affected the trade of New-York or

has in no wise affected the trade of New-York or any other American city.

As the federal Parliament must meet during the hot summer months, when the State legislatures are not in session, a cool climate is essential for the federal capital, which is to be in New South Wales, but not within a distance of one hundred miles of its metropolis. This makes it probable that a site in the southeastern portion of the colony will be selected, the land being elevated, within easy reach of the Snowy Mountain ranges, and difficult of access from the coast, an advantage in the case of hostile attack. The federal Parliament is to meet in Melbourne until a site for the federal capital has been decided upon, but until this has been effected Sydney will remain the seat of federal government. The federal territory will consist of an area of one hundred square miles, and the city will probably become the finest in Australia.

QUEENSLAND'S OBJECTION. In Queensland the objection to federation to based largely on the fear that it may interfere with the supply of colored labor in the sugar plantations, but # is doubtful whether any federa Parliament would unduly interfere with the interests of any staple colonial industry. As soon as the bill becomes law the federal government will take possession of the postal, telegraph, telephone, military, naval defence, lighthouse and quarantine arrangements, siso assuming the collection of all customs and excise revenue, the rallways remaining the property of the respective States in which they are situated, although preferential rates will be disallowed. There will be a High Court of Australia, but the right of appeal to the Court of Appeal in England will be retained. The federal government may also take over the whole or a ratable portion of the public debts of the States, and convert, renew or consolidate them, each State indemnifying the federal government for the same.

It is probable that the establishment of the federal Parliament will assist in raising the standard of political life in Australia. The Senate will consist of six Senators from each colony, elected by the residents of the same as one constituency, for a term of six years. The House of Representatives will be chosen by the people of the States in proportion to their numbers, the total number of representatives to be as nearly as possible two for each Senator, the conditions of election to be determined by the Parliament of each State. Many of the provisions have been adapted from that of Switzerland, there being a general desire that the basis should be as broad as possible. One remarkable feature of the federal struggle in Australia has been the utter absence of party feeling. In each colony the followers of the Government and the members of the Opposition are found ranged shoulder to shoulder in defence of the Commonwealth bill, and even its opponents are compelled to declare that they are in favor of federation, aithough not on the lines laid down in the measure against which they are fighting. That the bill will command a majority more of the Commonwealth bill, and even its opponents are considerable in New South Wales is tolerably Parliament would unduly interfere with the interests of any staple colonial industry. As soon

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